



Becoming a Member of the Age-Friendly University (AFU) Global Network – The 10 AFU Principles

The Age-Friendly University (AFU) principles reflect the work of an international, interdisciplinary team convened by Professor Brían MacCraith, President, Dublin City University (DCU) to identify the distinctive contributions institutions of higher education can make in responding to the interests and needs of an aging population. Launched by the Irish Prime Minister, (An Taoiseach) Enda Kenny in 2012 the 10 AFU principles have been adopted by a growing number of institutions in Ireland, the U.K., the U.S., and Canada.

The Association for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE) endorses the AFU principles and invites its members and affiliates to call upon their institutions to endorse the principles and become part of the pioneering global network of age-friendly institutions of higher education.

What are the 10 AFU principles?

1. To encourage the participation of older adults in all the **core activities** of the university, including educational and research programs.
2. To promote personal and career development in the second half of life and to support those who wish to pursue **second careers**.
3. To recognize the **range of educational needs** of older adults (from those who were early school-leavers through to those who wish to pursue Master's or PhD qualifications).
4. To promote **intergenerational learning** to facilitate the reciprocal sharing of expertise between learners of all ages.
5. To widen access to **online educational opportunities** for older adults to ensure a diversity of routes to participation.
6. To ensure that the university's **research agenda** is informed by the needs of an ageing society and to promote public discourse on how higher education can better respond to the varied interests and needs of older adults.
7. To increase the understanding of students of the **longevity dividend** and the increasing complexity and richness that aging brings to our society.
8. To enhance access for older adults to the university's range of **health and wellness** programs and its **arts and cultural activities**.
9. To engage actively with the university's own **retired community**.
10. To ensure regular **dialogue** with organizations representing the interests of the aging population.

Why should my institution endorse the AFU principles?

Across communities in the U.S., the number of older adults is growing annually at unprecedented rates and significantly more individuals are experiencing increased longevity. Response to the educational needs and interests of this emerging age population calls for new opportunities and innovative practices of teaching, research, and community engagement that colleges and universities in communities are poised to offer.

The AFU principles give your institution a valuable guiding framework for distinguishing and evaluating how it can shape age-friendly programs and practices, as well as identify gaps and opportunities for growth.

Joining the AFU AGHE network of global partners offers your institution the opportunity to learn about emerging age-friendly efforts and to contribute to an educational movement of social, personal, and economic benefit to students of all ages and institutions of higher education alike.

How does my institution go about endorsing the AFU principles?

Complete the following steps to join the AFU network of global partners working to build more age-friendly institutions of higher education.

1. Meet with colleagues from your department (and interested others from affiliated aging programs or centers) to review the AFU principles and map how they inform opportunities and gaps at your institution. Seek faculty endorsement of the principles at the department, program, and/or institutional level.
2. Arrange a meeting with the appropriate member of your administration (e.g., dean, provost, president) who would approve your institutional endorsement. Some institutions may also wish to discuss the initiative with a faculty assembly, a governance group, or curriculum committee.
3. Send confirmation of your endorsement to Christine O'Kelly (Age-Friendly University Network Coordinator, Dublin City University): christine.okelly@dcu.ie (website: www.dcu.ie/agefriendly). Include in your confirmation notice, the AFU contact at your institution, a link to your institutional website, and a copy of your institutional logo to be used on the AFU webpages. Copy M. Angela Baker (Director, AGHE): abaker@aghe.org.
4. Work with your communications office to develop a press release announcing your institution's endorsement of the AFU principles. DCU and AGHE are happy to provide comments for your notice. See AGHE's press release at: https://www.aghe.org/images/aghe/documents/agefriendly_pressrelease.pdf.

Some FAQ's

Is there a cost? Currently there is no cost to join.

Does my institution need to fulfill all AFU principles? While it is hoped that institutions will strive to address all of the 10 AFU principles to some degree, variation is expected given factors that distinguish institutions and their programs.

Who are some of the other AFU institutions? Arizona State Univ., Lasell College (U.S.), Univ. of Manitoba (Canada), Univ. of Galway (Ireland), Strathclyde Univ. Glasgow, Leeds Beckett Univ. (U.K.), Univ. of Canberra (Australia).

WELCOME TO THE AFU NETWORK! Your first step in endorsing and using the AFU principles to inform your efforts to develop more age-friendly programs and practices is the most important one. We look forward to the next steps with AFU AGHE global partners in building more age-friendly institutions of higher education.